St. Luke’s Episcopal Church
Profile 2016
Who We Are and Where We Want To Be

St. Luke’s faith community maintains a fairly high-church liturgical tradition and embraces the progressive theological views of the Episcopal Church. Music is an integral part of our worship experience, with most services featuring sung service music, hymns, and choral anthems. This unique balance between liturgical tradition and theological progression differentiates us from many other churches in the Dixon community and appears to be what attracts most new members to our church.

Our congregation consists of approximately 80 active members and Sunday attendance ranges from 30 to 50. Approximately 75% of parishioners are over the age of 50 and less than 10% are younger than the age of 10. The parish consists of a relatively equal number of professionals and non-professionals alike. Parishioners at St. Luke’s have diverse occupational backgrounds which include the arts, business entrepreneurship, education, engineering, healthcare, industrial, mental health services, law, and science. The parishioners of St. Luke’s demonstrate a true Christian tolerance and acceptance of diversity amongst individuals.

We are blessed to have a strong lay leadership and a resident ordained deacon to maintain the mission of our church. During the tenure of our recent part-time rector, all worked together to perform many of the administrative functions traditionally expected of a full-time priest. We believe shared service in the church’s mission encourages a vital sense of belonging at St. Luke’s and a spirit of volunteerism is alive and well within our parish.

Consistent with the demographic of our congregation, programs at St. Luke’s are primarily adult-oriented. While, we recognize the importance of these adult oriented-programs, we also recognize the need for increased effort towards developing and implementing comprehensive strategies to reach new families and youth in our community.
The Future of St. Luke’s

As we turn another page in the history of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Dixon, Illinois, we are looking for another Rector that will help continue taking us into the future. As a whole, our parish views this time of transition as an opportunity and time of reflection and a glimpse into a bright and exciting future.

Despite the generous support of our parishioners, St Luke’s realizes it cannot support a full time priest. Our recent rector, Father Frontjes, was part time and based on that experience we have come to the conclusion that our church can not only survive with a part time priest, but flourish. There is a spirit of volunteerism and support that is alive and well within the parish and our willingness to push our endeavors toward strong life. We also recognize that finding a part time priest will be challenging, but we feel it might be possible to attract a rector that would be willing to share with nearby parishes in similar straits, or that find other innovative alternatives acceptable.

We know that it is very important to continue to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth, while concentrating on retaining our current members. St. Luke’s parish is shown to be open to methodical change and we are theologically progressive.

We look forward to working closely with our new Rector and pledge to work with him/her in every capacity possible to accomplish the goals of our Rector and our parish.
Worship at St. Luke’s

Sunday Eucharist follows Rite II of the *Book of Common Prayer*, switching among Eucharistic Prayers A, B, C, and D. Parts of the service which usually are sung include the Alleluia (as appropriate), Great Thanksgiving, Gloria, Sanctus, Benediction, Lord's Prayer and Agnus Dei. The Psalm may be sung for some special services. Our typical service, framed by organ prelude and postlude, generally includes processional, offertory, and post-communion and recessional hymns. When the choir is present, they sing an offertory anthem.

In addition to the Sunday service, our worship schedule includes a Wednesday morning service consisting of a said Eucharist and Holy Unction. This service also follows Rite II, although this may vary depending on the church season. Also an occasional part of the program year schedule is a Sunday evening Anglican chant service. This meditative service features prayers interspersed with chant sung *a cappella* by a small group of choristers.

Special services which have been an integral part of the worship life at St. Luke's include Ash Wednesday, weekly lay-led Stations of the Cross during Lent, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Eve Vigil Mass, Easter Sunday festival Eucharist and Christmas Eve sung Eucharist.
Ministry Outreach – Music

The Anglican Communion is rich with musical heritage. Cathedral evensong, polyphony by Byrd and Gibbons, anthems by Tallis, rousing oratorios by Handel, the best loved hymns of Wesley and Vaughan Williams, and the stately music of Elgar are just some of the highlights of our tradition. This tradition is strong at St. Luke’s where music and the spoken word combine to strengthen each other and provide a focused and meaningful worship experience. We are blessed to have a variety of music and liturgy as part of our regular schedule. Our main Sunday service features the best-loved hymns of season from our tradition, led by talented organists and a gifted choir.

We are also blessed to give a home to the renowned Canterbury Singers, who provide a wide variety of liturgical music for many special occasions. People flock from miles around to enjoy Christmas Lessons & Carols, Choral Evensong, and the Spring Gala Concert, led by the Canterbury Singers. St. Luke’s is also home to monthly concerts by some of the world’s foremost liturgical musicians. Concerts are also held at nearby Philander Hall, named after the First Bishop of Illinois, Philander Chase.

Ministry Outreach – Community

St. Luke’s is very active in the community. Our deacon, as part of her outreach ministry, supports and organizes parishioners to help with the Buddy Bags of Dixon program, a weekend feeding program for school children. She also conducts prayers services at Heritage Square, a local assisted living facility; is a Chaplain at Rockford Memorial Hospital in Rockford, Illinois; and is a member of the executive committee for the Dixon Area Clergy Ministerial Association.

Parishioners give generously of their time in support of community charitable fund raisers, such as the annual Relay for Life cancer walk. They also give generously to the Dixon Food Pantry.
Parish Projects

The Parishioners of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church are proud of their 143-year old church. Maintaining its beauty and functionality is one of their priorities. Through special donations by parishioners, interested individuals, and a local funding organization, the Canterbury Society, it was possible to take on a number of major improvement projects in 2014 and 2015.

The original east stairway was torn out completely and rebuilt to the specifications to ADA standards. The railing is iron, and new wood is oak. Lighting was strategically placed over the landing. A new ceiling and tiled floor were installed in the room at the bottom of the stairs. New lighting was added to enhance the
lower space. A rotted window that did not match the others in the undercroft was replaced by one that does. Fire doors were installed in the work room and door to the tunnel. Equally important, the work is of high quality and workmanship beautiful.

The dangerous west stairway was removed and an ADA approved platform lift was installed. The lift is capable of holding a large size wheel chair with a companion, or three people to or from the undercroft. The exterior door to the undercroft was refitted with a switch operated automatic door opener.

Seriously rotted louvers were replaced in the church tower.

Thanks to another private donor, it was possible to fund the cleaning, re-cementing, and in a few cases, repair of the stained glass windows on the entire Sanctuary floor of the church. Protective, ventilated glass windows were installed on these windows as well.
Parish History

The Episcopal Church in Dixon was organized in 1838. The first church building was erected in 1856 and later extensively remodeled to serve as the parsonage for the First Methodist Church. Construction of the present Victorian Gothic-style church building began in 1871, and the new church was consecrated on St. Luke's Day, October 18, 1872. The rectory was constructed in part with stone left over from the construction of the Dixon Public Library in 1901. During the late 1950s and early 1960s the Eells Memorial Building was constructed as well as an underground passageway which connects the entire church complex and rectory.

The passageway goes under the alley between the church and the rectory and to the Eells Building. Several rooms are located in the passageway. The Eells Building has a large meeting room on the first floor and the Rector's study and Choir Room on the second floor.

A Hook & Hastings organ was installed in the church in 1885 and was replaced during the 1960s with the “Memorial Organ” (made possible by many memorial gifts). In 1993, the organ underwent a major restoration essentially building a new organ. The process of renovation and improvement continues to this day, making it one of the best organs in western Illinois, and rivaling many throughout the state.
Finances

St. Luke’s is well supported by its parishioners and is financially healthy, considering the size of congregation and the mean income of the community. The pledges have steadily increased, from $72,942 to $75,792 over last year. The plate offering was $8,449 compared to a budgeted $4,000 that was based on previous years’ experience. The endowment funds amount to $193,878.93, as of December 31, 2015, and will increase by another $15,695 in January with the receipt of a matching fund from the Canterbury Foundation as a result of parish donations towards the platform lift project during 2015.
Diocese of Chicago

The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago is lead by Bishop Jeffrey Lee and has 123 member congregations, spreading from Lake Michigan on the east, to the Wisconsin border on the north and the Iowa border on the west. It is located at 65 E. Huron Street, just east of St. James Cathedral and near the “Magnificent Mile” of shopping establishments on Michigan Avenue.

The Diocese is known for its leadership initiatives designed to support congregational vitality. To this end, the Diocese focuses its energies on four key programs: the College for Congregational Development, Fierce Conversations, Project Resource, and Living Compass. The Nicholas Center, located on the fifth floor of the Diocese’s office building, provides classroom space and accommodations for these programs as well as other leadership initiatives.
City of Dixon, Illinois

The city of Dixon, Illinois, is located on the banks of the Rock River, one of the tributaries to the Mississippi River. It is about 120 miles west of Chicago and 60 miles east of the Mississippi River and the Iowa border. It is surrounded by some of the Midwest’s finest farm land. The population, as of the 2013 census, is 15,333. It is the Lee County seat with courthouses, fire houses for the city and nearby rural areas, and law enforcement facilities for the city and county.

It is a vibrant city with the downtown centered on 1st Street, one block south of the Rock River. The waterfront park is host to frequent concerts. The historic movie theater has been restored and is host to many entertainment venues. A modern community hospital and major clinics are located in Dixon. The downtown area is fortunate to have several excellent restaurants with a variety of menus: Italian, epicurean, Thai, Mexican, and others. There is also a coffee bistro and a tea bistro in the downtown area.

The region, in which the city of Dixon is located, has a long history of artistic endeavors. The city has a lively arts scene with a small art gallery, The Next Picture Show, that serves as center for many of local and regional artists to showcase their work and an annual art fair in the park that draws artists and buyers from well beyond the local region. The John Deere historical site is in nearby Grand Detour and is open to the public and is host to art fairs, iron workers and other crafts. There are a number of musical events with the Sauk Valley Community Concert series which hosts performers from all over the world; the Canterbury Society classical and liturgical concerts; and folk music at the local book store and The Next Picture Show. There is also a live stage theater that has recently started with good success. The Ronald Reagan boyhood home is also located in Dixon and is preserved by private funds and is open to the public.

The city makeup is 79.2% white, 9.4% black, 7.8% Hispanic, and 1.9% of various other groups. As of the 2013 census, the median age is 39.8 years, the median household income is $40,797, the median home cost is $87,917, and the median gross rent is $579. The education levels for individuals over the age of 25 are 83.1% with a high school degree, 17% with a bachelor’s degree, and 5.7% with a master’s, or higher, degree.
Parish Staff

St. Luke’s has strong lay leadership and an ordained Deacon. The Senior Warden, Linda Brantley, with assistance from Rev. Rhoades and Rev. Andrea Myson from the Chicago Diocese, has been able to maintain continuous religious services with supply priests, occasional services by Rev. Rhoades and a local retired rector, Father Tom Lamb, during this period of transition.

The parish is fortunate to have an ordained deacon in residence during this transitory period. Rev. Mary Ann Rhoades has been a member of St. Luke’s in Dixon since 1995. She has served as Sr. Warden many times. After she retired in 2008, she became interested in ordained ministry and began looking into becoming a Vocational Deacon in the Episcopal Church. She has attended required classes the Deacon School in Glen Ellyn at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church and was ordained in June 2014.

Because of their leadership and the active support of the staff and vestry, attendance has remained strong at our services and some new parishioners have joined the parish.

With the exception of our organist, Ross Jallo, all the staff positions are volunteers.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>St. Luke’s Vestry 2015</th>
<th>Parish Staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linda Brantley, Senior Warden</td>
<td>Mary Ann Rhoades, Deacon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deb Davey</td>
<td>Ross Jallo, Organist and Choirmaster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gary Gehlbach</td>
<td>Randall Karstens, Organist and Organ Technician</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Kustom</td>
<td>Jim Brown, Groundskeeper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curt Schmitt</td>
<td>Gary Gehlbach, Treasurer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roger Linboom</td>
<td>Dolores Kustom and Ruth Rendleman, Historians</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luke Nelson</td>
<td>Carol Linboom, Recording Secretary</td>
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<td>Ben Nelson</td>
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